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## Chapter 1

# The Imbricated Structures of Refugeehood

### *Displacements*

It is summer 2003, a little after Turkish-Cypriot authorities announced they would no longer prevent people from crossing in and out of a self-declared state in northern Cyprus, across the island's 'Green Line' boundary. Masses have been flocking to checkpoints since that late April declaration, venturing into places they had not visited since the bloody period of the 1960s and the war of 1974. A restaurant in the old commercial centre of northern Nicosia is preparing for the evening's clientele. As we sit down, a friend joins our table for drinks. There is excitement over the 'opening of the border'. We reminisce at how last time we met some months ago we had to drive for an hour to meet outside Pyla village, in the east of the island, the only location reachable from both sides and closely watched. We keep repeating to ourselves and each other, through a myriad of examples, how just a couple of months ago, what we are doing tonight was unimaginable.

There is a mood of playfulness even as we criticize societal structures that endure. There is still need for change, we agree, and walls of prejudice to be broken. The south Asian waiter serving us, we assume, is exemplary of the problems of discrimination and integration still to be combated. So we ask about his living conditions, and unsurprisingly hear they are not great. But he also expresses a different concern, having himself crossed from the south after his visa expired to escape arrest and continue making a living in the north: 'Every day I

wake up and look across to the other side and remember the house where I used to live, and the place where I worked. It's so near and yet I can't go...'

These words prompted a long reflexive pause that guided the writing of this book. At that moment in 2003, they sounded strangely familiar; and as I continued to reflect on their possible meanings, I became aware of how deeply imbricated 'the Cyprus problem' is with the experience of being in Cyprus – no matter where one is placed and what subject position they occupy. This book is the outcome of those reflections and the ten years of research that they have informed. It is a study that looks at all those minor losses that have been engulfed by the 'Cyprus problem' for the last half-century and treated as insignificant, or at least secondary, to that other big question and the questions that attend it: how the Cyprus problem came to be, how the two sides interpret things, what the political future might hold, how we (academics, activists, citizens, internationals, mediators) can help realize that future. Those were the questions that occupied many of us in that jubilant mood of 2003 when this comment of tangential loss brought home to me the expanse of all those questions that major losses foreclose. Those minor losses, I came to realize, have not been incidental to the conflict – they have been shaped by it and they have shaped subjectivities within and 'beyond' it. And just like in other long-lasting conflict situations (Ireland, the Basque region, Israel/Palestine), those subjectivities are now informing everyday 'normal' relations. They service the jubilant and other affective socialities forming around newfound post-conflict 'freedoms' – as these develop across the now loosely monitored border and take the form of movement, work and consumption. It is to these processes that we must now attend if we are to understand the afterlife of conflict.

Physical separation in Cyprus today is no longer a vitally urgent concern for many locals, even though political division is the cornerstone of official rhetoric (Figure 1.1). But the

echo of the waiter's words, which communicate this vital urgency in a surprisingly slanted way, continues to inform my understanding of 'the border' in Cyprus. Those words were strangely familiar in multiple senses. On the one hand, they condensed the hegemonic Greek-Cypriot discourse of displacement in Cyprus: that 'our' lands are just over there, so near and yet so far, waiting for us to liberate them, having been snatched unjustly by Turkey after its invasion in 1974. The motif of the Greek-Cypriot refugee 'seeing' their house but not being able to 'touch' it appears in all kinds of literature from elementary school books where children in short stories send kites across the Green Line, to poems, fiction, and film, where crossing stray animals are envied. Before the opening of the central crossing point in Nicosia, binoculars were handed to tourists by Greek-Cypriot soldiers on guard, so they could see across the other side; dignitaries are still often bussed to the easternmost border point in the village of Deryneia to peer through a viewing machine turned towards the abandoned beach resort of Varosha, outside the Turkish-military-controlled town of Famagusta (Figure 1.2). There is a dwelling on division that has come to define Greek-Cypriot subjectivity. The tragedy of Greek-Cypriot refugees, the rhetoric goes, is that they are 'refugees in their own country'. The impossibility of crossing the border 'to go home' was for many years packaged as a corporeal experience for foreigners who, having 'felt' it, are encouraged to become ambassadors for the cause of 'return'. For the Greek-Cypriot-schooled public, the effect was to cultivate a sense of 'generalized refugeehood', a notion explored in later chapters. To Greek-Cypriots growing up after 1974, the definition of 'refugee' seemed obvious and the sentiments of loss that were expected to attend it was perceived as a structure of feeling that the whole population should share. The affective register was, and largely remains, central to the governmentality of conflict subjectivities.

So to hear this discourse articulated on the opposite side of the divide seemed strange – it was not ‘quite’ refugeehood. Firstly, the unreachable ‘other side’ was now the south, not the north. This was only partly strange. Turkish-Cypriots have often articulated longing for homes left in the south since 1963 and this has been well researched.<sup>1</sup> It is an articulation explicitly cognizant and opposed to the official rhetoric that has emphasized forgetting and looking forward to a brighter future in new homes in the north after the war of 1974.<sup>2</sup> Even when not explicitly opposed to official discourse, articulations of longing are positioned against this background, making the desire for return and lament for lost homes complexly ambivalent.<sup>3</sup> What seemed strange, in this sense, was a kind of geographic dislocation of affect. Not that in northern Cyprus homes in the south are not pined for, but that they are pined for in *this* way.

Secondly, the time of this affective expression seemed strange. The inability to ‘go home’ that produced this longing was not marked by the solidity of the border. It took shape precisely at the moment the border ‘opened up’, and when it seemed that in fact it was about to be dissolved altogether. Turkish-Cypriot authorities decided to allow crossings over the Green Line in April 2003, during a period (2002-2004) of intense political negotiations. At the end of these, a plan for reunification (the ‘Annan Plan’) was put to referendum in April 2004 and rejected by Greek-Cypriots. This deferred the dissolution of the border; but this was still to come in that summer evening of 2003, and the atmosphere of excitement was not conducive to such predictions, as I will explain in later chapters. The waiter’s comment exemplified what much of border studies literature has recently been documenting: that changes in the operations of bordering (the materialities of borders, the apparatuses that govern them, and the practices that develop around them) are not evenly distributed across

populations. Instead, the easing of some movement might imply, or in this case accentuate, the restriction of other movements (Aas, 2011; Rygiel, 2010; Brown, 2010; Bigo, 2006).

The radical change in the operation of the border in Cyprus in 2003 meant that Cypriots now streamed across it. 'Going home' was one of the primary activities Greek-Cypriots with ties to the north had been engaging in, *en masse*, and on a daily basis throughout the previous months. Middle-aged men and women visited homes they remembered from childhood; elderly parents were driven to meet neighbours, friends, and collect agricultural produce from fields and movables saved and collected by those now living in their 'old' homes; youngsters were guided through houses that suddenly seemed much smaller and landscapes perhaps less grand than they had remembered or imagined. There was ambivalence here too in the encounters between different 'owners' and in the performance of 'return'. But there was a definite sense that the main barrier to whatever 'return' might ensue, was slowly being lifted. So on that evening, the emblematic articulation of Greek-Cypriot refugeehood seemed misplaced, in both place and time. This was not the time to pine for lost homes, but to celebrate their imminent recovery – for Cypriots.

And ultimately, the cause of that misplacement was the strangeness of a specific subjectivity. It seemed strange ultimately, to hear what I had come to recognize as a Greek-Cypriot discourse on loss, articulated by a 'stranger' – an immigrant with no apparent familial ties to Cyprus. There was an uncomfortable realisation of the presumptuousness with which I, and others, had approached 'the Cyprus conflict' up to then, which guided much of my questioning since. So what did its strangeness mean? Is the 'so near yet so far' discourse actually the articulation of something banally self-evident, perhaps, and not the epitome of Greek-Cypriot politics at all? And does this banality point to something universally applicable rather than a feature of a specific political culture? What is the affect that a sealed

border exudes and how does it come to surpass the conflict that sealed it in the first place? How do ethnic divides exceed the binaries that define them? At the time, the waiter's comment seemed a spontaneous attempt to relate the excitement of meeting someone coming from the side that had become inaccessible. I since wondered whether it might have also been mediated by the experience of having lived in the south and amongst the Greek-Cypriot refugee discourse (likely to have been expressed by people above him in the class hierarchy). But it is the questions about the excesses of conflict imaginaries and the losses they foreclose that I have repeatedly returned to, and which I want to highlight as inroads to re-considering the subjectivity of refugeehood in general.

To recognize that the waiter's discourse is 'misplaced' is to recognize the misplacement of subjectivity too. And to reflect theoretically on the validity of these analytics of misplacement requires that we ask where it is that subjectivity is 'correctly' emplaced in Cyprus. Who are Cypriots, and who are the proper subjects of Cypriot refugeehood? To probe this question requires examination of several layers of discourses about refugeehood, displacement, and loss, which I engage in later on. And most importantly, I argue, it requires engagement with the ways in which all these layers are connected to each other – examined under the metaphor of imbrication. Such imbrication is not unique to Cyprus. To return to the long-standing conflicts mentioned above, the discursive structures developed in Palestine, Ireland, and Spain govern and affect the experience and policy of migration today. In Northern Ireland, where bordering has undergone a similarly radical shift as in Cyprus after the Good Friday Agreement, the legacy of the conflict has created a familiarly 'grim reality for people of colour, refugees, and migrants' (McVeigh and Rolston, 2007:11) where the 'politics of identification... position migrants and minority ethnic communities within dominant sectarian discourse'

(Geoghegan, 2008: 174). In Ireland, narratives of immigration and the legitimacy of refugees entail ‘unresolved Irish memories of colonisation, the Famine, and emigration’ (Moriarty, 2005: 6.7). The mired politics of occupation and international recognition in which the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is embedded are another conflict facet familiar to Cyprus. International migration in Palestine arises through these politics as a question on which ‘Israel demands the last word’ and this results in limited and patchy regulation by the Palestinian Authority, as exemplified by failure to link regular work with regular stay (Khalil, 2008: 12; also 2010). And on the other side of the wall, ‘Israel’s labor migration policy reflects the state’s continuous anxiety over a changing ethnoscape’ (Rajman, Schammah-Gesser, and Kemp, 2003: 733), an anxiety stemming directly from the history of the conflict there, and resulting in the placement of irregular women migrants at the bottom of the scale. And in Spain, conflicts over autonomy and secession in the Basque region and Catalonia have differentiated both areas in their immigration policies. Catalanian parties have articulated opposition to centralising attempts from Madrid on the point of immigration policy resulting in sometimes more progressive and at other times more restrictive approaches, while Basque parties have built on ‘the link between the promotion of internal diversity and Basque values’ (Jeram, 2013). The legacy of conflict in Spain means, in short, that ‘immigration is not so much a component of diversity as it is a vehicle through which existing diversities are brought to the fore’ (Zapata-Barerro, 2010 : 171). These complex and multiple situations are in different ways reflected in the situations I examine in Cyprus. A major claim of this book is that the entrenchment of conflict structures in society and government implicates – and most importantly imbricates – forms of classification and exclusion, as well as the experiences that go with them, that stretch far beyond the conflict.



And it is out of these imbrications that post-conflict subjects, of multiple positionings, emerge. In Cyprus, the framing of such imbrications is refugeehood.

### ***Refugeehood, Power, and Conflict***

Received wisdom has it that refugees flee war. Much less is said about what they find after they do so, not in terms of their own reception, but in terms of the conflicted societies they land in. At the same time, much of the literature on forced displacement grapples with this seemingly simple link between conflict and refugeehood. One example is the long debate that persists over the appropriateness of the term ‘environmental refugees’ to level arguments about the need for protection of people who are forced out of unliveable habitats. And while at the start of these debates environmental degradation could have been tied to wars and conflict (El-Hinnawi, 1985; Gibreab, 1997), policy-makers today have to contend with the vast displacements that follow natural disasters and rising sea levels (Bates, 2002; Keane, 2003; Hartmann, 2010). This only confirms a basic tenet of refugee studies: that refugeehood is not an objective but a political category. As McNamara puts it, ‘[the assertion] that environmental refugees do not exist is still a social construction of environmental refugees, a subject identity reliant on an absence or negation of a particular characteristic or condition’ (2007:15).

In the same way, the assertion that political and economic adversities can be separated out as producing refugees in the first instance and economic migrants in the second is also a social construction of refugees and economic migrants. This second debate, the most enduring in the field of forced migration studies, manifests the predicament of using legal standards to square politics and ethics. Many scholars have insisted for some time now on the need for policy-makers to extend the interpretation of ‘refugee’ so that it

accounts for the fact that people flee for multiple reasons and that most irregular migrants do not fall neatly under one of the two categories (political refugees / economic migrants) but somewhere in the vast grey area between them. They have convincingly argued that the insistence of states on this erroneously sharp distinction is a political tool that enables them to deny refugee protection to great numbers of people who should qualify for it (Gibney, 2004). They have also shown that the legal basis of labelling refugees is a shifting field itself: over the last two decades, argues Zetter, “the refugee label has become politicized, on the one hand, by the process of bureaucratic fractioning which reproduces itself in populist and largely pejorative labels whilst, on the other, by legitimizing and presenting a wider political discourse of resistance to refugees and migrants as merely an apolitical set of bureaucratic categories” (2007: 174). At the heart of this regime, Andersson has more recently argued (2014), lies a vast industry that relies on security and surveillance apparatuses and employing humanitarianism and development discourses to meet out profits on everyone but irregular migrants. And even though Andersson brackets out the legal debate and the terminology of ‘refugeehood’ from his study, he makes it clear that this is the performative stake in the entire operation of what he instead terms the ‘illegality industry’. This use and abuse of the legal concept (Schuster, 2003) also elicits differentiated practices of migration, we now know – far from being docile victims, asylum-seekers make choices, often based on considerations of these shifting legal apparatuses (Schuster, 2005). But for precisely these reasons, others have argued, it is vital to insist on maintaining refugee status as a special category requiring protection irrespective of political priorities (Hathaway, 2007). Ironically, while this debate about the correctness of classifying ‘convention refugees’ as different from others (e.g. refugees, internally displaced persons, individuals in need of humanitarian protection) hinges on the interpretation of the parameters of the 1951

Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (henceforth the 1951 Convention) as if these clauses could be objectively upheld, at the same time that all sides agree that their implementation in practice is political.

This book looks at these politics in an expansive way that stretches beyond the legal frame of the 1951 Convention application. It traces how legal parameters produce political subjects who are oriented in specific ways vis-à-vis refugeehood, explicitly or unbeknownst to themselves. An ‘economic migrant’ who pines for a home in southern Nicosia but not one in south Asia; asylum-seekers whose claims may be judged on whether they have crossed a ceasefire line in Cyprus but not multiple such lines before getting there; foreign women who suffer violence normalized by a militarist structure sustained through concepts of refugeehood; Cypriots who engage in litigation battles because their losses are not properly scripted into the calibrations of refugeehood by the powers that be. All these subjects fall out of the strict definition of 1951 Convention ‘refugees’. And yet, their subjectivity is determined by how that definition is understood and diverges from local uses of the term ‘refugee’ – uses that are multiple, plural, and far from unitary. Attention to these subjectivities and their (re)productions provides a clearer sense of the tensions and contestations in the foundational concepts that are present in the discussion in refugee studies, forced migration, and displacement.

In the pages that follow, I explain how, in Cyprus, the label ‘refugee’ has come to denote the victimized condition of the national self in remarkable divergence from the script of the 1951 Convention; how that subjective positioning can be internalized by others who do not belong to the national group but who are remarkably fluent in the idiom of longing for the other side; and also how it has constructed a solid basis for excluding a number of people who feel they too have legitimate claims to ‘refugeehood’. Taking the situation in

Cyprus as exemplary of the governmentalities that inform applications of the 1951 Convention elsewhere, I argue that it is from these exclusions, and the claims of loss that they deprioritize that we have to begin constructing the political field within which the ‘refugee’ label comes to create refugee subjects. And it is precisely that political subjectivity that the term ‘refugeehood’ as I use it here is meant to convey. Those losses that officialdom classifies as ‘minor’ in Cyprus and discounts from the hegemonic imaginary of loss constitute fields of experience, modes of being, affective dispositions, reflections on the legal, orientations within the political. They are not descriptors of identities that we might take for granted (refugee, non-refugee). *Refugeehood*, and not *refugeeness*, is not an ‘identity’ but a subject position that is in this case thoroughly invested in the Cyprus conflict. And it is one that determines not only the status and position of ‘refugees’ on the island (however we define them) but of everyone living on one or the other side.

In Cyprus, refugees (in the 1951 Convention sense, but arguably beyond it too) do not *just* flee conflict. They also land into it, whether they have arrived here having fled other conflicts, or whether they have fled their homes on the island years ago. Consciously or unbeknownst to them, people on the island live with a conflict that determines their everyday lives in significant ways. The temporal connections between conflict and refugeehood exist here in the multiple. They orient political subjectivity towards transition by fostering a rhetoric of return at the same time as they solidify this rhetoric, making such political subjective orientation permanent. Refugeehood in this sense is not only shaped by specific national discourses, that Malkki suggests are incredibly pervasive even beyond national and territorial boundaries (1995: 4-6) – it is also a key factor of the ‘national order of things’ (ibid). So a central point of analysis in this book is about how displacement comes to displace other displacements – as when for example people are made to feel ‘less refugee’

than others, or where their refugee identity is questioned or denied altogether. For if refugee subjectivity hinges on the conditions of empowerment, as Malkki's study shows, the Cypriot case prompts us to rethink the temporal manifestations of governing refugeehood. Malkki argues that Hutu refugees in the Mishamo refugee camp were less empowered than those settled in Kigoma town because of their attachment to the refugee identity (ibid: 8-17). This attachment shares similarities with Greek-Cypriot refugee discourses, giving pause for rethinking how the temporal governmentalities of refugeehood might produce diachronically disempowered political subjects.

Part of the problem is that in Cyprus, as in other protracted conflicts like Palestine (Chatty, 2010), refugee identity endures across generations. At this point in 2016, third generation refugees would themselves be young adults. It is also a matter of the quality of 'durable solutions' (Harrell-Bond, 1986) and the fact that the solutions provided by the state at various phases of the conflict were embedded in a logic of temporariness. Those grandchildren of 1974 refugees have come to expect different things of their displacement certification documents, their 'refugee cards' as they call them, than their parents did. And it is also that while repatriation did not materialize for many refugees in Cyprus, the re-building of lives that renders 'refugee return' always a misnomer (Hammond, 2004) began shortly after that crisis point. Tent-comprised refugee settlements might loom large in the imagery of refugeehood in Cyprus, but their actual existence was relatively short in the Greek-Cypriot case (they were dissolved by 1976). So even though temporality is a crucial factor in the multiple layering of refugeehood in Cyprus, it is not the passage of time per se, or the views on history and the nation, or even the infrastructures that mark continuity and belonging that are at stake. It is how time is governed that makes the difference and how time is used to distinguish some refugees from others who are officially excluded from that category.

And that time refers not only to the temporality of waiting that has recently been pointed out in migration studies as a predicament of irregular mobility (Andersson, 2014; Griffiths, 2014; Conlon, 2011). It refers also to historical time which marks out major events that created ‘proper’ refugees and other events that created other forms of displacement – in the language of law and policy. It is that governmentality of time that emplaces people, infrastructures, law, and affect within and outside refugeehood.

Cyprus has served as an important example in understanding conflict and development. Even in ‘early’ studies there was a concern to look beyond the moment of flight to the ways in which refugees manage lives and uncertainty (Loizos, 1981; 2008; Volkan, 1980; Zetter, 1991). Nearly four decades after that seminal study of Greek-Cypriot war refugees (Loizos, 1981), the question today is not development but the detrimental effects of those policies and logics that had initially appeared successful. The refugees at the focus of this book are not the coherent groups that make up classic ethnographic case-studies. They are the marginal groups that the ‘refugee’ label keeps out. In this sense, it could be said that the book departs from mainstream research on displacement. It examines refugee subjectivity as a structural aspect of citizenship regimes. It looks at specific but multiple refugee groups differently integrated in the same location. Analysing their battle with integration, it recasts ‘refugee’ as the foundational concept for establishing structures of exclusion. It is a study of what ‘refugeehood’ does on an everyday basis across society.

Refugee studies have for good reason argued for a need to view refugees beyond victimhood. It is a call, as Nyers (2013) shows in a careful examination of UNHCR, activist and other refugee-focussed discourse, that is easily expounded, but nearly impossible to achieve in a context where the proof of refugee status is so intimately tied to victimization (also Fassin and Rechtman, 2009). What I present here brings the argument full circle. I

revisit the image of the *sans papiers* as an iconic political figure to argue that multiple exclusions and possibilities arise within the evolving structures of displacement and accommodation. I want to recast the relationship between refugees and conflict, as a relation of power in a Foucauldian sense, meaning that the question we should be asking is not about a property that is or is not (power, conflict, refugee), but qualities that morph and change.

It is incredibly apt that since 2015, faced with a purported ‘refugee crisis’, which is rather a crisis of refugee reception in Europe, citizenship scholars are turning to one of Foucault’s shortest texts to speak about the confrontation of people and governments.<sup>4</sup> In it, he speaks of a division of labour between people who are indignant and talk on one side and governments who deliberate and act on the other.<sup>5</sup> This is immensely instructive for the work of scholars who have thus far argued that citizenship is not a binary (in or out, passport-holding or not), but a matter of gradation (native, minority, migrant, naturalized).<sup>6</sup> The destitute Vietnamese boat people that prompted the writing of Foucault’s Geneva address may be the extreme of victimhood, but power morphs through them into the call for accountability that international citizenship mounts. Loss remains a key theme here.

Images of destitution in the iconic refugee figure are prominent in other philosophies. Derrida’s notion of ‘hostipitality’ (2000), uses the image to call for cities of refuge that do not prefigure mutuality as a condition of care. The image is also present in the figure of the person who remains unaccounted for by government mechanisms in Badiou’s vision of Evental (revolutionary) sites existing outside the ‘situation’ (2001). This divestment of subjectivity (regained either by these figures themselves or by others speaking on their behalf or giving them refuge) is power-laden and political. It is as if the refugee is the ground zero from which philosophy can become political. Agamben’s insistence on the process by which encamped Jews were moulded into ‘bare life’ figures after deliberately being

denationalized by the Nazi regime (2004; Arendt, 1951) is precisely about that process both as analytical tool and a philosophical question. His answer on both counts is to insist that being a *sans papiers* is not a condition but a political process. But if today it is today an undoubted fact that refugees have agency and that the stripping of life to its 'bare' form is no simple task (even in the face of proliferating camps across European spaces), we must now reconsider how and why we have come to think of refugees as totally lacking that agency in the first place.

Arendt, the foremost theorist of the *sans paper* subject brings us back to the political underpinnings of refugee terminology: "The term "stateless" at least acknowledged the fact that these persons had lost the protection of their government and required international agreements for safeguarding their legal status. The postwar term "displaced persons" was invented during the war for the express purpose of liquidating statelessness once and for all by ignoring its existence', she writes (1948: 355).

It is often remarked that Arendt's analysis of the refugee situation, and also Foucault's, are prescient of what we are witnessing today. It is vitally important, in making such remarks however, to clarify that what is current in their analyses are not some chance characteristics of a 'situation' but the parameters within which the links between refugees, conflict, and power emerge. What sounds hauntingly familiar today is the realisation that the 'more the number of rightless people increased, the greater became the temptation to pay less attention to the deeds of the persecuting governments than to the status of the persecuted' (ibid: 374). It is not random 'things', actions, situations, that we see today that resemble what Foucault and Arendt saw, but deliberate practices that have endured their criticisms. In practice, cities of refuge may be configured by ambivalence as Derrida predicted, but that ambivalence comes to look very different when it becomes imbricated in



specific national discourses and politics of locality. The affective ambivalence articulated in ‘hostipitality’ could easily be read alongside Papataxiarchis’ analysis (2016) of native responses to the arrival of refugees (estimated at three to five thousand a day) on the island of Lesbos in the summer of 2015. Papataxiarchis frames the response within a discourse of ‘patriotism of solidarity’ (ibid), a conditional kind of humanitarianism that sets up cities of refuge open to everyone unconditionally, but which succeeds in doing so only in the knowledge that such lifting of conditions is temporary – and which ultimately falls back on well-established connections between hospitality and national identity.

In the following pages I argue that it is by examining the politics that produce the status of the persecuted between scales of legal and political priorities that we can put the attention back to the practices of persecution. And when we do that, we also see that persecuting governments are not only the ones from whom refugees flee, but those to whom they appeal for refuge too. A careful and critical calibration of loss is required, I argue, that pushes the debate past the binary either/or approach and examines how the evaluation of loss operates; who and what it subjects; what actions and agency it elicits; what it produces, and what it forecloses.

### ***Imbrications***

Refugeehood is about the intricacies of citizenship. As it is treated in this book, it does not signify the lack of citizenship. If anything, in Cyprus, refugeehood could be thought of as a privileged position in civic subjectivity. What it shares with mainstream accounts of it, however, is that either through presence or through lack, it defines citizenship. These links are not simple or stable; they are uncertain, shifting, unexpected. But they nevertheless emanate from firm structures that exist and are maintained by daily work on the governmental, legal, and affective planes. As a way of maintaining this double focus on the

structural aspects that need to be questioned, and the shifting aspects of what actually happens at the intersections of individual and governmental practice, I use the idiom of imbrication.

In the wake of well-rehearsed post-structural critiques, a call for such ‘double focus’ might seem tired. Yet it is in the context of an increasingly obvious need to account for ‘structure’ that much of the current theory seeking to understand the neo-liberal order is emerging. And yet, that ‘structure’ can longer be a simple question in the way that middle-way theories like structuration (Giddens, 1984) might have suggested earlier. The questioning of what exceeds materiality in the most tangible of objects that actor-network theory asks is exemplary (Latour, 2005). The emergence of geography as a key domain for understanding complex capital shifts (Harvey, 2001; Sassen, 2011; Thrift, 2008) is equally indicative. Structure is important to seminal post-structuralist texts exactly because it bears the possibility of deconstruction (Derrida, 1976) and the dissolution of single-order signification (Baudrillard, 1973). It is from this perspective that I keep returning to structures, metaphorically in the image of a roof, and analytically in the case of governmentality apparatuses, in the book.

Foucauldian governmentality, the full force of which emerged in Anglophone analysis after the translation of his oral work, in the form of *Collège de France* lectures (2004; 2008; 2009; 2012) hinges on exactly this centrality of structure even in the most counter-conductive formation of self.<sup>7</sup> Central to Foucault’s concept is the double facet of discipline and care, working not in separate domains (as for example in the repressive and ideological apparatuses of Althusser [1971]) but arising within the same field. The working of power in governmentality is about the subscription and reproduction of ways of being governed from within. And this ‘within’ is again, a double ground when we are dealing with biopower:

working on the level of the body as well as on the level of population, both of which are produced by biopolitical governmentality. Thus, a body of citizens is posited as the ‘population’ and defined by particular characteristics down to the individual body level, but then (or rather so that) governmental apparatuses can be put in place to ensure the congruence between the putative ‘population’ and the actual bodies being governed. In my earlier work I examined such practices in depth with reference to the rendering of ‘minority’ populations in Greece (2013). I am here developing a much more encompassing concept of ‘minoritization’: I am talking of particular and generally targeted exclusions (such as the situations of Turkish speakers in northern Greece), but at the various forms of governing put in place that exclude or discount a much broader spectrum of experience – in fact the vast majority of population who do not fit the ideal. And they do so not always, perhaps not even mostly, in a targeted way, but often inadvertently, as a by-product of other governmental conducts. That is how *minor losses* arise. Minor losses are thus also a double concept because they are conducted through a central figure of the victim but found wanting, and lose out, with reference to that victimhood.

But that conduct through the ideal, is precisely what also elicits counter-conduct. For as soon as that ideal is recognized as such, it is recognized as a dispositive of government and not an actual body or population part. It is recognized for the incongruence between the ‘us’ that population is meant to solidify and the exclusion of ‘me’ effected in the process. This is the workings of performativity that Butler’s earlier work on Foucault tackles (1996). For Butler, performativity emerges in the space between subjection and subjectivation as a destabilizing condition of selfhood (1996) – a ‘real’ self, just as a totally performative persona recedes from view. And this allows space for critique and, I argue, the contemplation of being conducted otherwise. What I want to highlight through the idiom of imbrication then

is a way of maintaining a focus on what is constraining, or enabling, in governmental practice and thinking to the ways in which people interact with, internalize or counter those structures – what allows them or prompts them to ‘see like a state’ (Scott, 1998), what exceeds explicit knowledge but subjectivizes in implicit ways (Mitchell, 2002) and what crafts the everyday as a question of the state (Das, 2007).

The image I wish to evoke here is of a roofing structure where tiles overlap in specific arrangements, but only partly; and where these interstices allow processes to happen (rainwater to run off, soil and dust to build up, plants to sprout, animals to nest), while also serving the purpose of disallowing other processes (water leaking or air gushing through). And while the structure itself has this purpose, it is characteristic of roofs to leak, tiles to break, gaps to allow wildlife in. The unexpected is embedded in the structure and not distinct from it. I therefore ask here how we might think these metaphors theoretically in ways that allow us to approach refugeehood in an expanded way. For if refugees in Cyprus appear difficult to recognize through current debates in refugee studies, we should resist the instinctive reaction of classifying them on the basis of the legal parameters of the 1951 Convention and infer that they ‘are not refugees’ e.g. because they reside in their own country. Instead, we should look to the techniques by which refugeeness is conferred and denied and see in them the continuities between international, national, and individual assumptions about what a refugee is, what they should look like, and how they should behave. In those terms, refugeehood in Cyprus is about otherness. But it is so in surprising ways – a category punctuated by many crevices that entrap people they were not meant to. I speak here not of ethnic otherness, but an otherness that was not targeted in the first place, as an exclusion that the Green Line border was meant to effect. This ‘surprising’ aspects of the border require us, I want to argue, to employ similarly expansive metaphors. The

conceptualisation of the border as process (Green, 2013; Demetriou and Dimova, 2018), thus also requires a geometric metaphor that goes beyond the shift from line to area and two-dimensional area patterns (lattice, nodes, mesh). The visual metaphor of imbrication communicates this expansiveness.

References to imbrication have been used to describe how planes are entangled in one another (e.g. the political in the social, the local in the global).<sup>8</sup> The metaphor of imbrication seems to be taken in one's stride, without much discussion of what it might help us conceptualize. An imbricated arrangement, the definition goes, is one 'composed of parts (leaves, scales, or the like) which overlap like tiles' (OED). Roof tiling is given in most dictionaries as the key image for this definition, and the Latin origin of the word points to gutter tiles (*imbrex*) that carry away the rainwater (*imber*). *Imbrex* roof tiles are differentiated in masonry from *tegula* roof tiles because of their curved form, *tegula* tiles being flat, and the two kinds are often used together for better drainage. Valpy's *Etymological Dictionary of the Latin Language* of 1828 relates the word *imbrex* to the Greek word for rain ὀμβρος [*ómvros*] (1828: 197), where, in classic etymological fashion, the tracing stops. There are, however, suggestions that this backward trajectory continues outside the Indo-European linguistic system (Beekes, 2010). This etymological story can in fact be taken as exemplary of my point in using imbrication to speak of power complexities. I do not see etymology as holding some truth in itself, so that one can follow a route (e.g. down the gutter tiles) and arrive at some beginning of time located in Greek antiquity, but as offering interesting overlaps that can help us expand a conceptual tool, in this case a metaphor, which inevitably will hit upon its own limitations too.

Imagined as the effect of tiling a roof therefore (and not the 'original' gutter tiling), imbrication speaks of an expansive layering and patterning that is different to three close

alternatives: (i) stacking, where layers overlap completely, (ii) alignment (as in gutter tiles) where there is no layer but a singular route, and (iii) enmeshing, where layers are dissolved into one. Imbrication, furthermore, retains something of substantive differentiation (each tile) but in an arrangement that is neither fixed (as in that much problematized metaphor of co-existence, the mosaic) nor completely arbitrary. The unexpected arises in imbrication as the interaction of matter with process (tiles, water, soil and animal droppings, with rain, wind, or nesting). Imbrication is expansive in that it goes beyond a single-layer mesh, beyond a single type of interaction as in the mosaic that is looked at and makes sense only in being looked at.

In the analysis I undertake in the book, imbrication describes the aspects of emplacement and displacement that give rise to interactions between individuals, practices, laws, policies, and patterns of thought. If the border in Nicosia exudes an aspect of trauma and loss, for a migrant, a tourist, or a refugee (however and by whomever defined), this cannot happen without the process of politicization, in which the border is thoroughly embedded. While differently configured in each case, this politicization is neither anterior nor posterior to the ontology of the border; it is the effect of conflict, violence and war, as well as of policing and the continuous re-enactment of forms of violence that policing entails. By seeing this relation between the border and politicization in terms of imbrication we could better analyse processes unfolding in time and space and influencing one another on legal, affective and material registers. And we can begin to clearly see the fault lines between police, politics and the political that according to Ranciere (2010) mark out the terrain of democracy.

In Cyprus, access to rights relating to migrant and refugee protection, as well as its limitation, is mediated through the structure of the conflict. The quote of the waiter with

which I began this chapter is indicative of how work and residence, denied by migration law on one side of the divide can materialize on the other while this denial can produce discourses that emulate political subjectivities of unlikely populations. The links between ethnic enemies and migrants are an important part of this layering. They form an imbricated infrastructural frame that shapes lives and subjectivity. This is not the Marxist infrastructure that underpins ideological (non-material) superstructures. They merge the two to form the bedrock on which new structures (policing, political campaigning, refugee and immigration procedures) are deposited. Imbrication is manifest here in its geological sense, as the formation arising from sediments deposited in an alluvial or other channel. Time is crucial to this layering, whereby governmentalities oriented at one kind of population at a particular point in time (Turks as ethnic enemies) come to subjectivize others (migrants) as the border develops into something else. These connections are explored in detail over the chapters that follow.

### ***The Losses Encountered***

The metaphor of imbrication guides the book's organisation as well as the methodology that informs its insights. The exploration is itself an effect of time. Since my first engagement in 2002 with 'the Cyprus conflict' as an object of study, different questions have been asked within the between the different layers I examine here. How do refugees, individually and in organized ways, narrate, explain, and perform understanding of loss? How has the law interfaced with political rhetoric and people's needs in the post-war polity? What does the terrain of conflict, in the materiality of the Green Line, look like and what is its heritage value? How do migrants experience the divided capital of Nicosia? What are women's priorities in a peace settlement? How are Turkish-Cypriots governed within post-war

structures in the south? These are questions that have guided my research through the years, at some points asked separately under projects themed around ‘displacement’, ‘human rights’, ‘conflict heritage’, ‘migration’, ‘gender’, and ‘insecurity’. Some of the answers were partly to be found in sets of recorded interviews with refugees, litigants, civil society representatives, and migrants. Others were formed in practice, through my involvement in reconciliation initiatives since the late 1990s, and my association with youth groups, peace activists, foreign trainers, local professionals, women’s groups, and, more recently, as ‘reconciliation’ was inserted into mainstream politics, policy-makers too.

The coherent formulation of these answers, however, and the new questions it prompted, was the result of a primarily ethnographic approach, where daily encounters, chance conversations, class discussions, the rituals of public protest, and those of domestic protestation, were observed and noted – sometimes in writing, sometimes not. A native anthropology here prompted a particular emphasis on reflection taking shape as constant questioning of my positionings vis-à-vis interlocutors, of possible ‘deeper meanings’, and most importantly of awareness of the performative field of interactions. That awareness in turn was heightened through another, if fraught, resource of native anthropology, my situated past. Memories of conversations held and conversations silenced, and of the moments when conflict violence appeared, flash-like, in family exchanges, were often encountered in the context of research and writing, leaving an undoubted trace in the analysis, which I have tried in several occasions to mark out. But the trace I have mostly tried to tackle is the very question of appearance of those moments. An example: a few years ago my mother had a bougainvillea in front of the house pruned, exposing a hole in the sandstone, which I remarked was quite some damage for a support nail. ‘Oh no, that’s not from a nail, it’s from a bullet in 1974, when coupists came looking for your father; and we



[herself and her parents] were standing right behind the wall'; matter of factly, on the occasion, correcting a chance remark, and switch back to the topic at hand – was the pruning overdone? Flash-like talk of the conflict, throwing the scripted narrative off course in the largely leftist environment I grew up, in the period immediately after the war – occasional jokes about family members who had been 'a little bit coupist' in the past also popped up, also flash-like. It is the nature of these flashes that puzzled me over the years and it is partly this that my analysis of performativity tries to grasp.

Not accidentally then, my enquiry begins with violence. Chapter two is an attempt to illuminate events around those flashes, to retell the story of violence that frames the major losses within which the minor losses I discuss later emerge. This is a reflexive and analytical exercise. It re-counts those 'major losses' but at the same time questions the counting done so far. Still uncertain, debated, and largely unavailable, this counting founds a governmentality of conflict that still determines how one becomes a political subject in Cyprus – it is an exercise of necropolitical demography.

These major losses construct the registers on which refugeehood is examined in the rest of the book: the affective, the legal, and the topological. The first section, *layers*, suggests that we see these registers as layers of tiling: affect (chapter three), law (chapter four), and space (chapter five). Thus focused on the affective register, chapter three surveys differing descriptions of 'loss' among Greek-Cypriot refugees and analyses the ways in which differently-situated discourses conform and confront the hegemonic narrative. This continues into chapter four, which explores the extension of the affective register into the legal. Here I explore specifically the disjuncture between local and international law and the formation of 'displaced person' as a legal category in Cyprus, the meaning of which is intimately attached to the everyday notion of 'refugee'. It is this disjuncture that propels the

working of performativity, I argue, in turn enabling forms of counter-conduct based on litigation. This form of counter-conduct is firmly anchored in systems of evaluation specifically around the notions of 'property' and 'home'. I turn to these in the analysis of the topological register of loss in chapter five. Here, war devastation in buildings and the natural environment (Ledra Palace Hotel and the Nicosia Airport area) is used to show the ways in which losses are evaluated in the zones of abandonment and question the processes through which property is separated from junk. I consider these processes as part of the constitution of the abject, as techniques of dejection where speech effects the work of silencing.

Section two, *crevices*, delves into the entanglements of these layers, where these registers provide the scales for calibrating loss on the basis of which further minor losses are excluded. These are the losses of 'others', those not specifically targeted in the first place, but caught in the entanglements of refugeehood nevertheless: migrants, women, and Turkish-Cypriots in the south. Accordingly, chapter six examines the experience of groups who have been alienated from the majority population through the constructions of refugeehood analysed in the first section: non-nationals, including recognized refugees, asylum-seekers, and other irregular migrants. These categories, it is argued, call forth a concept of protection and state responsibility that jars with the staple image of the refugee as a national victim-subject. Chapter seven surveys a range of gender-based exclusions arising from the governance of refugeehood, arguing that the gendered aspects of refugee concepts have positioned women as a particular kind of subject. This form of subjectivity has been central to the re-production of the nation through family constitution and domestic life, the organization of which vis-à-vis refugeehood is critically examined here. In the last chapter of the section, the construction of Greek-Cypriot refugeehood is reconsidered against its main category of exclusion, Turkish-Cypriot refugees. Revisiting some of the legal and material

registers that have, often inadvertently, resulted in the exclusion of various other groups, this chapter elucidates how these registers have been oriented against the figure of the ‘enemy’, personified by Turkish-Cypriots. It is argued here that the figure of this ‘enemy refugee’ is an absent presence in the constructions of refugeehood examined throughout the book.

The conclusion projects these arguments into considerations for analysing the theorizing displacement and refugeehood. It revisits some of the parameters that refugee protection has often taken for granted and which the ethnographic findings here question: that refugees flee from conflict settings into non-conflict environments, that international legal protection can be decontextualized from local social and legal concepts, that refugee status is a unified socio-legal category, and that refugee identity is marked by a sense of temporariness. Taken together, the data from this study show that refugeehood is an essential component of the ways in which citizenship is conceptualized and structured. That it can provide the means for establishing, maintaining, and reproducing discrimination, both in law, and in everyday life. And that ultimately, it affects a much wider group of people than those recognized under the ‘refugee’ label. Writing against the spectre of a Europe crumpling under the weight of anti-immigrant discourse in the summer of 2016, I am suggesting, among other things, that we pay reflexive attention to how structures and rhetorics that seem today surprising are actually the outcome of these deeply imbricated structures of discrimination, not only in Cyprus, but apparently across Europe and possibly far beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> See Navaro-Yashin (2012), Papadakis (2004), Dikomitis (2012), Ilican (2011), Scott (1996), Sahin (2011), Arslan (2008).

<sup>2</sup> Descriptions of these official discourses are provided by Bryant (2012), Volkan (1979), Kizilyurek (2002), Canefe (2002).

<sup>3</sup> Thoughtful accounts of this ambivalence are presented in Navaro-Yashin (2012) and Ilican (2011).

<sup>4</sup> Gordon, Isin,a and Bagelman, 13 November 2015, OpenDemocracy: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/michel-foucault/rights-and-duties-of-international-citizenship>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/michel-foucault/rights-and-duties-of-international-citizenship>

<sup>6</sup> Indicatively, Isin (2002; 2012), Soguk (1999), Ong (1999; 2003; 2006), Soysal (1995; 2015).

<sup>7</sup> A lengthy examination of this is undertaken elsewhere (Demetriou, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Brenner (2000: 368) and Surin and Hasty (2009: 22) are relevant among many others.